

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 0626

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP BG
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR TO
FRANCE AND SPAIN

REF: MADRID 0406

1. LT. GENERAL (RETIRED) KHWAJA WASIUDDIN HAS BEEN BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR TO PARIS SINCE SEPTEMBER 1976, AND BEFORE THAT WAS AMBASSADOR TO KUWAIT. WASIUDDIN HAD BEEN THE HIGHEST RANKING BENGALI IN THE PAKISTAN ARMY AT THE TIME OF THE BANGLADESH INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE IN 1971. HE WAS INTERNED IN PAKISTAN DURING THE CONFLICT, AND AFTER HIS REPATRIATION TO BANGLADESH IN 1973, HE RETIRED FROM THE ARMY.

2. WASIUDDIN WAS BORN IN DACCA IN 1920 AND IS A MEMBER OF THE NEWAB OF DACCA'S FAMILY, WHOSE ANCESTORS CAME FROM KASHMIR TO BENGAL SEVERAL CENTRIES AGO. HIS FATHER, KHWAJA SHAHABUDDIN, WAS A MINISTER IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE BENGAL, GOVERNOR OF THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE, PAKISTANI HIGH COMMISSIONER TO NIGERIA, AMBASSADOR TO THE UAR AND SAUDI ARABIA AND A MINISTER UNDER AYUB KHAN. WASIUDDIN'S UNCLE, KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN WAS PRE-INDEPENDENCE PRIME MINISTER OF BENGAL AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF
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PAKISTAN (1948-51) AND PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN (1951-53).

3. WASIUDDIN GRADUATED FROM THE PRINCE OF WALES ROYAL COLLEGE AND THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY, DEHRA DUN. HE WAS COMMISSIONED INTO THE ARTILLERY IN 1940. DURING WORLD WAR II HE SERVED WITH THE 24TH INDIAN MOUNTAIN ARTILLERY IN THE BURMA CAMPAIGN. FOLLOWING THE INDIAN PARTITION

IN 1947, HE HELD A VARIETY OF ARTILLERY POSTS IN THE PAKISTAN ARMY AND IN 1958 BECAME DIRECTOR OF ARTILLERY AT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS. IN 1960, HE ASSUMED COMMAND OF A BRIGADE IN THE 7TH DIVISION AT PESHAWAR. DURING THE SIXTIES, WASI- UDDIN HELD POSITIONS OF INCREASING RESPONSIBILITY AS MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR (MLA) OF EAST PAKISTAN, DIVISIONAL COMMANDER IN LAHORE AND CROPS COMMANDER IN MULTAN. IN THE PERIOD JUST BEFORE THE BANGLADESH INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE, HE WAS A LT. GENERAL ON DUTY AT THE GENERAL HEADQUARTERS IN ISLAMABAD. HE HAD BECOME SYMPATHETIC TO THE BANGLADESH CAUSE AND IN EARLY 1971 MADE THE DECISION TO SUBMIT HIS RESIGNATION TO THE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINIST- RATOR, YAHYA KHAN. PURPORTEDLY, YAHYA WANTED TO NAME WASHIUDDIN MLA AGAIN FOR THE REBELLIOUS EAST PAKISTAN BUT THOUGHT BETTER OF IT AND SUBSEQUENTLY PLACED HIM UNDER HOUSE ARREST.

4. WASIUDDIN WAS INTERNED THROUGHOUT THE BANGLADESH STRUGGLE AND COULD NOT RETURN TO BANGLADESH UNTIL EARLY FALL, 1973. THE PRIME MINISTER, SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN, FEELING UNEASY WITH A POPULAR AND HIGH RANKING OFFICER IN DACCA, MADE WASIUDDIN AMBASSADOR TO KUWAIT RATHER THAN CHIEF OF THE COMBINED MILITARY FORCES AS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED AT THE TIME. WASIUDDIN REMAINED IN KUWAIT DURING THE VIOLENT CHANGES OF 1975, WHICH INCLUDED THE ASSASSINATION OF MUJIB AND THE ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY MAJOR GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN, WHO HAD BEEN BARELY A CADET WHEN WASIUDDIN WAS A FIELD RANK. IN
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1976, WASIUDDIN WAS GIVEN THE AMBASSADORIAL POSITION IN PARIS, A POSITION WHICH SAVED FACE FOR WASIUDDIN AND ZIA, BOTH OF WHOM REPUTEDLY FELT UNCOMFORTABLE IN EACH OTHER' PRESENCE BECAUSE OF THE EARLIER DISPARITY IN RANK.

5 WASHIUDDIN WAS HIGHLY REGARDED AS AN INTELLIGENT AND EFFECTIVE AMBASSADOR IN KUWAIT. HE IS MARRIED AND THE FATHER OF FOUR CHILDREN.
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